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AUTHOR Moore, Jane
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ABSTRACT

This booklet was developed to help literacy instructors of older adults become more knowledgeable about these students. The guide is organized in eight sections that cover the following topics: older adults--who are they?; characteristics of older adults; barriers to learning; older adult developmental stages; the older adult learner; finding learning needs; meeting the older adult's learning needs; and how to optimize learning. Also included are 18 references and resource guides to (1) basic education and topics of interest to older adults and (2) further information on topics of interest. (KC)

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DEVELOPING SUCCESSFUL ADULT BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR OLDER ADULTS

Jane Moore
Project Assistant

This is a Section 310 Adult Education Project
of
Randolph Community College
Box 1009
Asheboro, NC 27204

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Adult literacy is a topic of concern to our nation today. However, little has been done to identify particular basic education needs and interests of the older adult learner.

Statistics show that in the United States, 70 percent of adults 55 and older have not completed high school. The United States Department of Education estimates that the elderly comprise 38 percent of the total illiterate population in our country. A lack of education among older adults presents difficulties to the individuals, family, caretakers, and society in general.

Specific objectives of this 310 Adult Education project were to identify basic educational needs and interests of the older adult, distinquish special characteristics of the population which affect the design and delivery of ABE, and improve context and methods of delivering literacy instruction to the older adult.

At the outset of the project, 20 older adults were contacted to give input about the interests and goals of older adults as they relate to basic education. Ten of the these adults were enrolled in ABE classes. Ten others were eligible, but not presently involved with the program. From this information, a survey was developed and distributed to 100 older adults. A second survey was developed to identify the most common interests with older adults. Both have been included as part of this guide.

Specific areas of interests to a majority of older adults were identified and competencies developed from the information gathered. These have been arranged into a resource guide of curriculum materials that are available to teach or reinforce skills involving named competencies.

Research was conducted to find and compile data currently available in the field of learning for the older adult. This information has been compiled to assist instructors and adult education professionals in planning effective basic education programs for this segment of society.

Material in this guide will prove useful in staff development for literacy professionals who work with the older adult population. It will also provide a basis for more complete study and curriculum development in the future.

"Education is a basic right for all persons of all age groups. It is continuous and henceforth one of the ways of enabling older people to have a full and meaningful life, and a means of helping them develop their potential as a resource for the betterment of our society."

1971 White House Conference on Aging

The following older adults made major contributions to society when they were well past their 80th birthday.

At 80, **George Burns** won an Academy Award for his performance in "The Sunshine Boys."
At 89, **Albert Schweitzer** was head of a hospital in Africa.
At 91, **Eamon de Valera** served as president of Ireland.
At 93, **George Bernard Shaw** wrote the play, "Farfetched Fables."
At 100, **Grandma Moses** was painting.

SECTIONS

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Resource Guide - Further Information on Topics of Interest

The purpose in preparing this guide is to address the basic educational needs of the older adult. For purposes of this guide, the term "older adult" refers to those aged 55 and older.

Every day the 65-year and older group increases by 1,600. In 1900, only four million U.S. citizens (3% of the general population) were over age 60. In 1977, this group had increased in size to 33 million. If these trends continue, by the year 2035, the number will double to 71 million.

Many of these older adults lack the basic academic skills that enable them to work independently and successfully in their communities. Modern health care and social services have produced an older generation that is healthy and has leisure time to learn basic skills. For many, it might be the first time in their lives that they have had the time and energy to devote to matters such as learning how to read and write. Whether for employment or personal needs, we must provide these adults with effective literacy programs designed to meet their needs. It is to this end that this guide is dedicated.

Older Adults: Who Are They?

Older adults, as referred to in this guide, may lack many basic skills. Some may even be classified as scholastically handicapped. The average older adult has less formal education than the young adult of today; however, he or she does have a broader understanding which young adults often lack. This understanding comes from years of life experiences.

Contrary to common belief, learning abilities do not decrease with age. However, as with any ability, if it is not used the ability can deteriorate. Age alone does not prevent learning.

Older adults, like adults in general, have a wide variety of needs, interests, and abilities. Personal goals, needs, satisfaction, and coping abilities differ so that each adult's needs have to be considered. Life changes that are a part of aging may require more advanced basic skills than many older adults possess. Changes that an older adult might face include fixed incomes, changing status, health and loss of spouse. These situations produce a need for basic information and skills to adapt to a new way of life.

Many older adults are slow or reluctant to come forward and express their need for basic skills. They feel embarrassed or ashamed for not knowing skills others think they should already know. For this reason, many adults will compensate for this lack of skills. Some ways of compensation include:

memorization
white lies (leaving glasses at home)
assistance by family or friends.

These techniques work, but on a limited basis. (The skills need to be available by the adult to use when the above techniques fail or to take their place completely).

To educate the older adult requires careful analysis of proper goals, an appreciation of older adults, and an understanding of how they learn. As educators we must help them set individual goals and assist them in meeting their goals.

Once a problem or need has been recognized, we are ready to begin meeting the educational needs. In order to meet these needs we should:

- identify, understand and accept all aspects of their personal and social identity crisis
- find and develop new ways of satisfying the fundamental need for positive consideration and understanding of their environment and being actively and productively engaged in it.
- discover and integrate all means that would allow them to actualize themselves at this new stage. (Lecterc, 1985)

Older adults may either be motivated to learn or may feel they are too old and have too little time left to learn anything new. Self discipline will not be a great problem for the older adult once motivation is present. Learning may be a product of leisure, vocation or self actualization.

Characteristics of the Older Adult

There are characteristics that set the older adult apart from younger learners.

Older adults have acquired set patterns in their thinking and behavior and also have set ideas of right and wrong. For new learning to take place these set patterns need to be revised or unset.

Older adults can be less tolerant of busy work and steadier in their pursuit of learning. They also tend to be less distracted by social interest.

Older adults have more years of experience and are readily able to relate new facts to their experience, adding enrichment and reinforcement to the learning process.

These adults may lack self confidence, most often due to fear of school or learning because of past failures.

Learning that is timed or pressured may not be appropriate for this student.

Health problems often create learning obstacles which demand attention.

Characteristics of the under-educated older adult include:

- lack of confidence
- lack of basic skills
- fear of school (past failures)
- inadequate economic resources
- varied academic aptitudes
- culturally uninformed
- different values, goals, attitudes
- inexperienced with academic goals or goal setting
- conflicting verbal and nonverbal communication
- feeling of helplessness
- varying levels of intelligence and experience

(Berdeaux, 1984)

Many of these characteristics are found repeatedly in literature and material dealing with the older adult population. Many negative aspects of these characteristics can be overcome with outside help.

Barriers to Learning

When educating the older adult there are barriers that may produce problems for the learning process. Along with barriers that prevent the process of learning, there are also barriers that keep the older adult from wanting or trying to learn.

Barriers to participation might include the following:

1. embarrassment
2. fear and insecurities from past failures
3. lack of understanding of the need to learn
4. transportation
5. lack of mobility, physical handicaps
6. lack of information about classes available.

(Jacobs, 1986)

Barriers can be classified into two groups. There are cognitive and non-cognitive barriers. Cognitive barriers include:

1. declining memory
2. decline in ability to perform paired tasks
3. slowed responses
4. decline in ability to solve problems and/or sort out learing.

Non-cognitive barriers include:

1. lack of interest
2. lack of education attainment
3. fears
4. lack of awareness.

(Hiemstra, 1975)

To help break down these barriers, whether cognitive or non-cognitive, the following suggestions are given for the adult educator:

• First of all, gain the student's trust. Let them know you are concerned and want to work with them to help master the skills they lack.

• Work at goal oriented learning. The student will learn better if that goal is one the student wants to fulfill, not the teacher's goal.

• Adapt teaching styles to fit the individual student.

• Try to keep motivation high. Learning may seem slow for the older adult. If he has experienced past failures, age may tend to hasten a decline in motivation.

• Meet the student's needs. Find out what the learner needs to know to cope with life at home or work.

• Also, keep in mind the student's health needs. These needs can present barriers that inhibit learning.

• Take advantage of other older adults in the class or group and rely on peer support. This can help keep motivation high.

• The use of appropriate teaching material is very important when educating the older adult. When possible, select material with the individual's goal or goals in mind. Keep the material relevant to these goals. Make sure the student can see progress in his learning.

Material with large print is a valuable aid for some older adults. Many older adults will have declining visual acuity and any extra help in reading their learning material will make them feel more capable of learning. The availability of material with larger print geared to the needs and interests of older adults in basic education programs is very limited. Magnifying sheets may help alleviate this problem. These may be purchased at most office supply stores.

Contact older adult agencies and support groups to spread the word about basic education classes. Most older adult centers sponsor congregate meal sites which are excellent locations to gather for classes. Newspaper and radio advertisements may also be effective ways to inform older adults about existing programs.

The older adult not only has barriers classified as cognitive or noncognitive, but also has age affecting barriers that can prevent learning from taking place. Age related factors or barriers discussed by Knox include the following: attention, speed, memory, practice and pace.

Attention for the older adult can be a problem. These adults have a great many past learning experiences that are stored. When new tasks (especially unfamiliar or complex) are taught, confusion follows for the learner. The older adult will try to fit new information with old experiences for information and will become confused, therefore losing the new information. They may even completely withdraw from the learning situation to "save" embarrassment.

Accuracy is a very important skill for the older adult. They believe that if they are correct, they will not be thought of as fools. Their accuracy may add to their success and satisfaction but it deletes their flexibility and innovation. As with the problem of attention, they try to fit the new with the old which produces a withdrawal from the situation unless they are able to match up the information. This need for accuracy may cause a significant decline in speed. Educators must be aware of time and exercise great patience as older adults work on written assignments.

A very important barrier, which is closely connected with "old age" is memory. Memory has a major influence on learning for the older adult. To understand this, the barrier of memory, it helps to break it into stages:

1) registration
2) retention
3) recall

Stage one, registration, is the first exposure to new material or to a new task. Registration does decrease with age, especially information that is acquired by visual exposure. The strength or meaningfulness of the original new material or tasks determines whether the new information is forgotten or kept. Immediate memory tends to decay more rapidly. A spacing of adequate time to attend to the new information without distractions will aid the stage of registration.

The next stage is retention or encoding of material in the mind. This is the stage that is most affected by whether the material is meaningful. Older adults tend to forget learning that they consider to be meaningless.

The last stage is recall. Recall occurs when material is remembered or used. Once again, this stage can decline with age. If the material to be learned is meaningful, then recalling of the material will not be a problem. Also helpful is to have recall conditions similar to the conditions of original registration. With age, the ability to organize new information or material at time of original registration causes some decline in the recall stage. A memory deficit can occur for most older adults when responding to and storing information simultaneously. As a result, older adults expand the scope of search when recalling information, taking more time and resulting in greater interference with new material.

Some older adults will express a reluctance to practice basic academic skills. Low ability adults or adults not exposed to learning tasks for years will be more likely to express this feeling. They have a more restricted range of incentives and rewards to reinforce learning. Simplified tasks and more tangible forms of reinforcement can be used to aid this problem.

The learning environment can be enhanced when adults are allowed to set their own pace. Their speed may be slow enough to cause concern on the educator's part. Remember that accuracy increases with age which helps compensate for a decrease in speed.

These barriers can be compensated for by various means. To help older adults learn effectively the educator can:

- emphasize their abilities and minimize their disabilities
- clarify structures by relating material to what they already know
- remember that what these adults learn depends on how they feel about what they learn
- allow the student to proceed at their own pace.

Older adults may increase their own ability to learn effectively by:

- accepting reality of their age, between young and old
- take time to learn and recall it
- avoid self induced pressure, take breaks
- break down complicated material
- avoid distractions when studying
- avoid acquaintances who insist older people cannot learn. (Brenton, 1983)

The problem of declining memory can be assisted by the following:

- use aids to make new information more meaningful and aid in recall
- present new material at a pace which allows the individual time to master and strengthen registration of new material
- use frequent summarizations to help facilitate review. (Cross. 1981)

Older Adult Developmental Stages

To help understand the older adult, knowledge of adult developmental stages is useful.

The developmental stage of the older adult includes any adult 45 years of age and older.

These years are a time of acceptance. There is acceptance of physical changes or decline in health; marital status; changes in career; living arrangements and of life itself. Many older adults take this time to reassess past goals and their own present situations. Accepting one's own life and reviewing it as being meaningful or meaningless may occur during these years.

Later years are definitely a period for adjustments. For some older adults it may be an overwhelming adjustment with too many changes occurring at once. This could produce situations the older adult may not be academically prepared to handle. For others, it may be a period of slowing down and the time to become all that they can be, beginning with what they already know.

Adult developmental stages in later years:

Adult (56-64 years)
Preparation for Retirement Years

- adjustment to health problems
- time to deepen personal relations
- prepare for retirement
- expand avocational interests
- finance new leisure
- adjust to loss of mate
- time to problem solve
- manage stress accompanying changes.

Adult (65+ years)
Retirement Years

- disengage from paid work
- reassess finances
- concern with personal health
- search for new achievement outlets
- manage new leisure time
- adjust to more constant marriage companion
- search for meaning of life
- adjust to single state
- be reconciled to death
- problem solve
- manage stress accompanying change. (Alpaugh, 1979)

The Older Adult Learner

To be an active participant in the learning process, the older adult must become attentive to existing signs of gaps in his/her life which might produce discomfort. (Lecterc, 1985) These recognized gaps must be identified and expressed in terms of needs. From these needs, the educational activity or activities can then be adjusted to enable the learner to fulfill those needs.

Older adults, like all adults, have differing learning styles and motivations. Some of these adults will be goal oriented. For example, many older adults assert that they would like to learn to read better so they can read the Bible. They have set their goal for their learning. Many older adults living in rest homes or retirement centers are activity directed. They may not have a specific goal at the beginning because they are there and it is an activity--"Something to keep them busy or alert." There are some older adults who are learning oriented and others, who are self-directed learners. Self-directed learners tend to have more responsibility for planning and directing their own course of learning.

A part of helping the older adult learn is to help him/her find his goal. The educator can assist by:

- helping the learner achieve a degree of meaning and happiness
- help the learner understand self talents, limitations and relationships
- help the learner realize the need for lifelong learning
- provide conditions in opportunities to help advancement in their growing/maturing process
- provide education for survival, literacy, vocational and health skills. (Himestra, 1976)

Finding Learning Needs

Once the learning style of the older adult learner has been established or the "gaps" have been confirmed, the task of identifying the learning needs for the individual begin.

There are different and varied needs that will be discovered. To help understand the different needs, a list of the types of needs follows.

coping -	skills in ABE classes, health or leisure time.
expressive -	hobbies or liberal arts
contributive -	skill building and can be productive for community service
influence -	skills needed in leadership and management
transcendence -	literature and philosophy.

(Lumsden, 1985)

Most learning needs of the older adult will fall under coping, expressive, or contributive.

To best establish the category of the learner's needs, the educator needs to focus on the learner's life situation and signs of unrest, allow the learner to express what they would like to be, do or know and then to help identify educational activities that correspond with these needs.

Individual needs of the older adult will be a key in the learning process. To determine these individual needs, the educator can use placement testing, student discussion, private discussions and/or independent activities with the student.

Another way to evaluate students needs is as follows:

Interview the senior adult. Write down perceived advantages of being an older adult. This may help expose existent needs.
Write down two major educational needs that emerged from first step above.
Group adults into small groups. Allow them to share their list of needs and select 3 major needs among 9-12 of the groups.
List all needs selected by different groups and indicated by vote the most important.
Join groups in a session of planning, informing them of results and giving them feedback.
Translate the needs into programs.

For a more individual approach the educator could use the first two steps: interviewing and writing down educational needs. For an overall program proceed with all the steps listed.

Meeting the Older Adults Learning Needs

In meeting the established needs of the older adult:

- identify, understand, and accept all aspects of their personal and social identity crisis.
- find and develop new ways of satisfying fundamental needs for positive consideration and understanding their environment and being actively and productively engaged in it.
- discover and integrate all means that would allow them to actualize themselves at this new stage. (Lecterc, 1985)

A positive approach is very important! Some suggestions that the educator may use to develop that positive approach:

- Help the older adult use intentional learning activities to cope.
- Make known role models who have acquired the desired competencies.
- Create settings where adults have freedom to discover and explore achievement of educational objectives.
- Help create a more positive approach to learning.

An additional suggestion to assist in promoting a positive approach is to keep the pace slow. Don't rush into trying to assess the older adult. First try to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the person. Then begin to prepare the learner to confront the new learning task. Old fears may exist; so acknowledge these fears and assure the student of a warm, friendly learning environment. The educator should have an extensive knowledge of assessment and counseling techniques as they affect older adults. (Leigh, 1980)

A very helpful model that can be used in assessing the needs of the older adult is the ADPIE Model developed by Oswald & Williams. The Letters ADPIE stand for assessing, diagnosising, planning, implementing and evaluation. The model consists of the following:

- **A**ssess factors which affect ability to learn
- **D**iagnose special barriers to learning
- **P**lan modifications in learning conditions
- **I**mplement new learnings
- **E**valuate educational outcomes.

How to Optimize Learning

Once the needs of the older adult have been assessed and activities for meeting these needs are planned, the next step is to optimize learning for the adult.

Optimal conditions are important in planning a successful learning program for older adults. The older adult will need a longer time to study on the new material. Also, a longer period of time needs to be allowed for the older adult to respond. An approach toward acquisition of appropriate use related to the new material will aid in learning.

Along with instruction, use demonstration with related aids. Make the learning situation one that is informal, has mutual respect and collaboration of all included in the learning process. Extra clues or aids for assisting the learner with the appropriate answer the first time will encourage and help ease old fears making the learning task easier. (Alpaugh, 1979)

Older adults will have deficits that will become apparent when trying to learn. A goal of the educator should be to minimize their performance deficit. The educator should try to use familiar materials whenever possible. This helps relate the new materials with old experiences causing a better retention of the new.

Older adults may be trying to learn under poor health conditions. Be sensitive to these health problems. Allow short periods of exposure and use enlarged material or magnifying devices whenever available or adapt your material for visually impaired students.

Compensate for sensory or perceptual deficits.

Eliminate testing formats as a method for practice. This may add stress of failure to the student who has failed in the past.

Minimize fatigue. Take frequent breaks and allow the setting to be informal but with order. Some of the learners may be in wheelchairs or have arthritis, causing fatigue and problems with writing or sitting for long periods. Allow for this with breaks or moments of relaxation away from the material, perhaps only using mental relaxation if breaks disrupt too much. Avoid prolonged high intensity learning sessions. This may produce stress and fear of failure.

Instruct the older adult according to their age. They are not children and do not want to be treated as such or talked down to on a child's level. At times, poor health may cause older adults to take on the characteristics of children, making it easy to think of them as such. But always remember--they are adults and need to be taught as adults.

Focus on concrete concepts whenever possible. Concrete concepts are much easier for the older adult to grasp and retain. Allow over-learning of the new material, making it more and more retainable and available for recall. (Lumsden, 1985)

Stages of learning new material

1. exposure - includes perception and comprehension of material.
2. short term memory - storage of new material. Process of retaining material is eased. If registration and comprehension is adequate, then long-term retention is taking place.
3. process new learning, relate to past and future situations
4. recall - evaluation of that which has been decoded.
5. application - applying that which has been learned to life situations.

The preceeding stages of learning only work when:

- the student feels the need to learn and is able to have input into what, why and how they learn.
- the content and method taught have a meaningful relationship to past experiences and this can be utilized as a resource for learning.
- the amount of autonomy exercised by the learner corresponds with what is required by the mode or method utilized.
- the climate minimizes anxiety and encourages the freedom to experiment.
- the individual's own learning style is taken into account.

(Smith, 1982)

Conclusion

This guide has been prepared for the literacy instructors of older adult students. It's intentions are to assist the educator at being the best he/she can be by being knowledgeable about the older adult and the characteristics he may possess. Detail is given to problems the educator may encounter and possible solutions or suggestions have been supplied to help those problems.

The fundamental purpose of our guide has been to enable the educator to better develop the personal power and self-worth of each older adult student through basic education. Once the older adult student has acquired these basic academic skills he will be prepared to challenge beliefs, values, and behaviors, thus enabling him to function effectively in our society.

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Interest Locator and Resource Guide

Survey results from the older adult population indicated strong interests in particular reading, math and consumer related skills.

From these interests, a resource guide was developed to indicate competencies involved in subject areas identified and instructional materials covering the competencies. The listing is not intended to encompass all materials which might be used in the instructional program. Often, the most appropriate educational resource is the one in which the student is interested. For example, when teaching how to order from a catalog, the most meaningful lesson is taught with catalogs. Medicine labels make good reading lessons. Use actual reading material of interest when at all possible.

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION INTEREST LOCATER
OLDER ADULTS

Randolph Community College is interested in finding out what needs and interests older adults have, particularly those which relate to reading, writing, and arithmetic. In order to get this information, we need your help. Will you please assist us by giving us your ideas and opinions.

PERSONAL INFO- AGE___ SEX___ YRS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED___

LIVE ALONE/FAM___ LIVE REST/RETIREMENT HOME___

LANGUAGE ARTS

___ learn to write letters
___ learn to write stories
___ study grammar
___ poetry
___ learn to use library
___ read yellow pages/phone book
___ improve spelling
___ read better
types of reading material?_____
___ improve handwriting
___ read want ads, sales, catalogs

MATH

___ add
___ subtract
___ multiply
___ count money, make change
___ budget
___ loans, credit, interest
___ divide
___ fractions
___ decimals
___ income tax forms
___ write checks, keep checking account

HISTORY

___ American history
___ NC history
___ local history
___ geography
___ world history

SCIENCE AND HEALTH

___ electricity
___ engines
___ weather
___ sound and light
___ our bodies
___ nutrition
___ safety

OTHER

___ planning insurance programs
___ reading road maps
___ prepare for taking drivers test
___ finish high school
___ other (list) _____
_____
_____

Below are listed statements describing feelings that older adults often have. Please check the statements that best describe your feelings about yourself.

___ I'm often lonely.
___ I don't know where to go to get information about programs.
___ I don't feel that I'm making the most of my talents and abilities.
___ I feel powerless to change most of the financial and housing problems I face.
___ I feel isolated and homebound.
___ I like meeting new people.
___ I am confused about what benefits I am eligible for.
___ I miss the routine of work.
___ I feel older people are discriminated against.
___ I have difficulty getting around town.
___ I enjoy having increased leisure time.
___ I don't know much about options for retirement.
___ I feel I'm presently dealing quite well with my retirement, but there may be future problems I haven't foreseen.
___ I don't have enough to keep me busy.
___ I don't think other people understand the problems elders face.

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION INTEREST LOCATER
OLDER ADULTS

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PERSONAL INFO- AGE___ SEX___ YRS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED___

LIVE ALONE/FAM___ LIVE REST/RETIREMENT HOME___

LANGUAGE ARTS

21 learn to write letters
29 learn to write stories
1 study grammar
2 poetry
10 learn to use library
8 read yellow pages/phone book
30 improve spelling
40 read better
types of reading material?_____
18 improve handwriting
6 read want ads, sales, catalogs

MATH

6 add
4 subtract
8 multiply
12 count money, make change
29 budget
8 loans, credit, interest
2 divide
5 fractions
2 decimals
21 income tax forms
27 write checks, keep checking account

HISTORY

20 American history
18 NC history
23 local history
3 geography
10 world history

SCIENCE AND HEALTH

1 electricity
2 engines
12 weather
3 sound and light
40 our bodies
29 nutrition
14 safety

OTHER

11 planning insurance programs
19 reading road maps
5 prepare for taking drivers test
12 finish high school
___ other (list) will_____
_____
_____

Below are listed statements describing feelings that older adults often have. Please check the statements that best describe your feelings about yourself.

10 I'm often lonely.
12 I don't know where to go to get information about programs.
11 I don't feel that I'm making the most of my talents and abilities.
7 I feel powerless to change most of the financial and housing problems I face.
5 I feel isolated and homebound.
89 I like meeting new people.
14 I am confused about what benefits I am eligible for.
21 I miss the routine of work.
37 I feel older people are discriminated against.
41 I have difficulty getting around town.
72 I enjoy having increased leisure time.
15 I don't know much about options for retirement.
21 I feel I'm presently dealing quite well with my retirement, but there may be future problems I haven't foreseen.
9 I don't have enough to keep me busy.
78 I don't think other people understand the problems elders face.

OLDER ADULT INTEREST LOCATER

Please place a check by subjects you are interested in learning more about.

___ writing letters to friends and family
___ writing stories
___ improving reading
What do you like to read?_____
___ improving spelling
___ improving handwriting
___ writing checks, keeping checking account
___ budget
___ income tax forms
___ loans, credit, interest
___ American history
___ NC history
___ local history
___ nutrition and our bodies
___ safety
___ reading road maps
___ prepare to take driver's test
___ finish high school
___ other _____

Would you be interested in a morning ABE/GED class meeting at the Salt Box (to learn to read, improve reading, writing and math, learn more about basic skills, or finish high school)?

RESOURCE GUIDE

Basic Skills Interests Covered:

Balancing Checkbooks
Catalogs
Drivers License
Drugs
Energy
Handwriting
Health
Income Tax Forms
Insurance
Legal Services
Library
Letter Writing
Newspapers
Nutrition
Phone Book
Political Candidates
Spelling
Travel Opportunities
U.S. History
Wills
World History
Writing Stories

Publishers:

Cambridge (Prentice Hall) Order Dept., 200 Old Tappan Rd., Old Tappan, NJ 07675
Contemporary Books, Inc., Chicago/New York
Educational Design, Inc., 47 West 13 Street, NY, NY 10114
Media Materials, Inc., 2936 Remington Ave., Baltimore, MD 21211
New Readers Press, 1320 Jamesville Ave., Box 131, Syracuse, NY 13210
Steck-Vaughn Company, P.O. Box 26015, Austin, TX 78755

Balancing Checkbooks

Competencies: Demonstrate use of bank accounts.
Interpret procedures and forms associated with banking services.
Interpret interest.

Reading

Level	Publisher	Title
2-3	Educational Design	Money Math
2.8	Media Materials	Mathematics for Consumers
3.0	Media Materials	Mathematics for Business
3-4	New Readers Press	Using a Checking Account
3-5	Educational Design	Writing for the World of Work
3-5	Educational Design	Life Skills Reading, Book 1
3.5-6	Cambridge	Banking (Follette-Coping Skills)
5-7	Media Materials	Checking Accounts

Catalogs

Competencies: Use catalogs to order goods and sevices.
Interpret clothing and pattern sizes using tables.

Reading

Level	Publisher	Title
0-4	Steck-Vaughn	Adult Reading 1700
2.5-3.5	Cambridge	Consumer Know-How
2.8	Media Materials	Life Skills English
3.5	Educational Design	Life Skills Writing

Driver's License

Competencies: Read highway signs.
Compute mileage and gas consumption.
Identify procedure to obtain drivers license.
Interpret license requirements.

Reading

Level	Publisher	Title
2.8	Media Materials	Mathematics for Consumers
3-4	Steck-Vaughn	Adult Reader
3-5	Educational Design	Life Skills Reading
3.5-6	Cambridge	Owning an Automobile (Follette Coping SKills)
4-5	Educational Design	Life Skills Driving
5	New Readers Press	Studying for a Driver's License
5	New Readers Press	Taking the Wheel

Drugs

Competencies: Read medication labels and terminology.
Read product directions, warnings, danger signs and symbols.
Recognize problems related to drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.

Reading

Level	Publisher	Title
3-5	Educational Design	Life Skills Reading, Book 1
5	New Readers Press	Drugs: Facts for Decisions
5-7	New Readers Press	Practice in Survival Reading-Book 3 - Label Talk
5-7	Media Materials	Drugs, Cigarettes, and Alcohol
7-8	Steck-Vaughn	Basic Science for Living, Book 1

Energy

Competencies: Read a meter.
Identify methods of conserving energy in the home.
Interpret electrical bills.

Reading

Level	Publisher	Title
2.5-3.5	Cambridge	Living Expenses-Know How Series
2.5-3.5	Cambridge	Consumer Know How-Know How Series
3.5-6	Cambridge	Finding Housing (Coping Skills)
3.5-6	Cambridge	Using Community Resources (Coping Skills)
5-6	New Readers Press	Matter and Energy
5-7	Media Materials	Consumer Contracts
5-7	Media Materials	Conserving Energy in the Home
6-7	Cambridge	Readings in Physical Science

Handwriting

Competencies: Form print and cursive lettering correctly.

Reading

Level	Publisher	Title
1-3	New Readers Press	Laubach Way to Cursive Writing
4-8	Steck-Vaughn	Improving Your Handwriting

Health

Competencies: Locate medical and health facilities in the community.
Read medical history forms.
Identify practices that promote physical well-being.
Identify practices that promote mental well being.

Reading

Level	Publisher	Title
0-4	Steck-Vaughn	Adult Reading 1700
2	Steck-Vaughn	Applying Reading Skills- Can You Top This?
3.5-6	Cambridge	Getting Medical Assistance (Follette)
5.0	New Readers Press	Help Yourself to Health
5.2	New Readers Press	Getting Health Care
6.4	New Readers Press	This is Your Body
7-8	Steck-Vaughn	Basic Science for Living, Book 1

Income Tax Forms

Competencies: Read income tax forms.
Interpret tax tables.
Read and interpret tax information.

Reading

Level	Publisher	Title
2.5-3.5	Cambridge (Follette)	Insurance-Tax Know-How
3.0	Media Materials	Mathematics for Business
3-4	Steck-Vaughn	Living in America-Democracy in Action
3-4	Steck-Vaughn	Living in American-Citizens Today
5-7	Media Materials	Taxes

Insurance

Competencies: Read and interpret information about car insurance.
Read and interpret information about home related issues.
Read and interpret information about medical-life insurance.

Reading

Level	Publisher	Title
0-4	Steck-Vaughn	Adult Reading 1700
2.5-3.5	Cambridge	Insurance & Taxes Know How (Follette)
3-4	New Readers Press	Insuring Yourself
3-4	Steck-Vaughn	Living in America-Citizens Today
4-6	Steck-Vaughn	Family Development Series Family Money Management
4-6	Educational Design	Life Skills Reading, Book 2
5-7	Media Materials	Medical Insurance and Benefits
5-7	Media Materials	Insurance
5-7	Media Materials	Mathematics for Business
5-7	Media Materials	Automobiles

Legal Services
Competencies: Identify procedures for obtaiing legal advice.
Interpret information about consumer rights.
Read and interpret differences to criminal and civil law.

Reading

Level	Publisher	Title
3-4	Steck-Vaughn	Living in America-Democracy in Action
3-4	Steck-Vaughn	Everyday People]
3.5-6	Cambridge	The Law and You - Follette Coping Series
3.5-6	Cambridge	The Government and You - Follette
4-6	Educational Design	You and the Law
5-7	Media Materials	The Judicial System
5-7	Media Materials	Legal Services

Library
Competencies: Use library resources, card catalogs, reference materials, indexes, and dictionaries.

Reading

Level	Publisher	Title
4-6	Steck-Vaughn	Where to Go, Who to See, What to Do (Family Development Series)
2.8	Media Materials	Life Skills English

Letter Writing
Competencies: Write friendly letters.
Write business letters.
Address envelopes.
Compose paragraphs.

Reading

Level	Publisher	Title
2.8	Media Materials	Basic English Composition
3-7	Media Materials	English for the World at Work
3-4	Cambridge	Messages, Invitations and Letters, Book 3
3.5	Cambridge	The Letters You Write
3-5	Educational Design	Life Skills Writing
3-5	Educational Design	Writing for the World of Work
5	New Readers Press	Writing to Others
5-7	New Readers Press	Everyday Reading and Writing
5-7	Contemporary	Building Basic Skills in Writing, Book 2
5-7	Contemporary	Writing for a Purpose
5-7	Contemporary	Life Skills Writing

Newspaper
Competencies: Identify parts of a newspaper.
Interpret information found in newspapers.
Develop critical skills for evaluating media reports.

Reading

Level	Publisher	Title
3-4	New Readers Press	Writing Activities for Newspaper Readers
2-5	Educational Design	Improving Reading with Carbon Strips
3-4	Cambridge	Using the Newspaper
3-4	New Readers Press	Practice in Survival Reading, Book 5-Daily Paper
4-6	New Readers Press	News for You (weekly paper)
5-7	New Readers Press	Everyday Reading and Writing
4-7	Educational Design	Life Skills Reading

Nutrition
Competencies: Select a balanced diet using basic food groups.
Read nutritional and other information on food labels.
Identify food storage requirements

Reading

Level	Publisher	Title
3-4	Steck-Vaughn	We Are What We Eat
4-6	Educational Design	Food and Nutrition
5-7	Media Materials	Nutrition in the Home

Phone Book
Competencies: Use telephone directories to locate phone numbers.
Identify procedures to locate emergency numbers.
Interpret telephone bills.
Use a pay phone.
Take telephone messages.

Reading

Level	Publisher	Title
2.8	Media Materials	Life Skills English
3-4	Cambridge	Telephone Skills
3-4	Cambridge	The Phone Calls you Make (Follett)
3-5	Educational Design	Life Skills Reading Bks. 1,2

Political Candidates
Competencies: Fill out voter registration forms.
Read and interpret ballots.
Identify voter qualifications.

Reading Level	Publisher	Title
0-4	Steck-Vaughn	Adult Reading 1300
3-4	Steck-Vaughn	Living in America-Citizens Today
3-4	Steck-Vaughn	Living in America-Democracy in Action
3.5-6	Cambridge	Government and You (Follette)
4-6	Steck-Vaughn	Being an Informed Citizen (Family Development Series)
5-6	Steck-Vaughn	Steps to US Citizenship
5-7	Media Materials	US Government-How and Why It Works
5-7	Media Materials	Voting

Spelling Competencies: Improve spelling for leisure, home and business writing activities.

Reading Level	Publisher	Title
0-5	New Readers Press	Focus on Phonics 1-4
0-5	Contemporary	All Spelled Out Bks. A-D
1-7	Steck-Vaughn	Target Spelling 180-1260
3-8	Steck-Vaughn	Spelling Steps
7-11	Educational Design	Improving Your Spelling Skills
7-12	Steck-Vaughn	Gateways to Correct Spelling

Travel Opportunities

Competencies: Interpret information about vacation planning.
Identify recreational facilities and activities.
Read travel stories for leisure and enjoyment.

Reading Level	Publisher	Title
3	Steck-Vaughn	Wheeling It (Mastering Basic Reading Skills)
2	Steck-Vaughn	Alpine Room
3-4	New Readers Press	Practice in Survival Reading-Book 6-It's On the Map
3-4	New Readers Press	Practice in Survival Reading-Book 2-Signs Around Town
3-5	Educational Design	Life Skills Reading, Book 1
3.5-6	Cambridge	Using Transportation (Follette)
5-7	New Readers Press	Everyday Reading and Writing

US History
Competencies: Identify forces in history impacting on the present.
Identify well-known persons in American History.

Reading

Level	Publisher	Title
2-3	Steck-Vaughn	America's Story
5	New Readers Press	Our United States
5	New Readers Press	Settlers in America
5-6	Steck-Vaughn	Our USA Parts 1, 2
6-7	Steck-Vaughn	America's Story, Bks, 1,2
7-8	Steck-Vaughn	Our Nation's Story, Parts 1, 2
7-10	Steck-Vaughn	My Country-the USA
7-10	Steck-Vaughn	The American People, Bks. 1, 2

Wills
Competencies: Identify purpose of wills.
Interpret common rules and ordinances.

Reading

Level	Publisher	Title
3.5-6	Cambridge	The Law and You (Follette Coping Skills)
5-7	Educational Design	You and the Law
5-7	Media Materials	Legal Services

World History
Competencies: Identify countries on a world map.
Read and understand forces in world history.

Reading

Level	Publisher	Title
2-3	Steck-Vaughn	World Geography and You, Bks. 1, 2
4	Steck-Vaughn	World History and You, Bks, 1, 2
5-7	Contemporary	Bdg. Basic Skills Social Studies

Writing Stories

Competencies: Write stories for enjoyment or family history.
Compose paragraphs.
Develop main ideas.

Reading Level	Publisher	Title
2.8	Media Materials	Basic English Composition
3-4	New Readers Press	Feelings, Thoughts, and Dreams
3.6	New Readers Press	Feelings Illustrated
4-6	Educational Design	Practicing the Writing Process-Book 1: Paragraphs
5	New Readers Press	Write All About It
5	New Readers Press	Writing Me!
5-6	Cambridge	Put it in Writing, Bks, 1, 2, 3
5-7	Contemporary	Building Basic Skills in Writing, Bk. 2
5-8	Educational Design	Practicing Writing Process: Essay
5-8	Educational Design	Practicing Writing Process: Writings

Listed below is a resource guide for instructors to assist with obtaining material for topics presented in this guide.

State fully the specific topic for which you need materials because many of these resources offer more than one program for older adults.

Education

Institute of Lifetime Learning
AARP
19109 K. Street, NW
Washington, DC 20049

National Center on Arts and the Aging
National Council on Aging
West Wing 100
600 Maryland Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20024

American Association for Adult and Continuing Education
Suite 230
1201 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036

Community Education Center on Aging
Suite 211
2723 Foxcraft Rd.
Little Rock, AR 72207

Elderhostel, Inc.
Suite 200
100 Boylston St.
Boston, MA 02116

Seniors Teaching Seniors
Brookdale Institute on Aging and Adult Human Development
622 West 113th St.
New York, NY 10025

Health

Arthritis Foundation
1314 Spring St., NW
Atlanta, GA 30309

National High Blood Pressure Information Center
120180 National Institute of Health
Bethesda, MD 20205

American Association of Retired Persons
Program Scheduling Office
Program Resources Dept.
1909 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20049

American Society for Geriatric Dentistry
J. Wendall Lotz, DDS
Ohio State University
305 West 12th Ave.
Columbus, OH 43210

Nutrition
Community Nutrition Institute
Suite 300
1146 19th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036

Food and Drug Administration
Office for Consumer Communications
Room 15B-32 (HFE-88)
Parklawn Building
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857

Society for Nutrition Education
1736 Franklin St.
Oakland, CA 94612

U.S. Dept. of Agriculture
Human Nutrition Information Service
Room 360
6506 Belcrest Rd.
Hyattsville, MD 20782

American Council for Healthful Living
439 Main Street
Orange, NJ 07050

Center for Consumer Health Education
Suite 301
380 West Maple
Vienna, VA 22180

American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance
1900 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091

National Health Information Clearinghouse
1255 23rd St., NW
Suite 275
Washington, DC 20037

American Association of Retired Persons
1909 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20049

Consumer Information Center
Pueblo, CA 81009

National Institute of Mental health
Public Inquiries
5600 Fishers Lane, Room 15C-05
Rockville, MD 20857

National Mental Health Association
1800 North Kent St.
Arlington, VA 22209

National Cholesterol Education Program
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
Bethesda, MD 20205

Nutrition
Anne Jacoby, Area Nutrition Program
P.O. Box 314
Vincennes, IN 47591

Nutrition Information and Resource Center
Pennsylvania State University, Benedict House
University Park, PA 16802

Drugs
National Council on Patient Information & Education
Suite 1010
1620 I Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006

Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association
1030 15th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

Hearing
The National Hearing Aid Society
20361 Middlebelt Rd.
Livonia, MI 48152

American Speech and Hearing Association
10801 Rockville Pike
Rockville, MD 20852

Sight (Eyes)
American Optometric Association
243 N. Lindbergh Blvd.
St. Louis, MD 63141

National Society to Prevent Blindness
79 Madison Ave.
New York, NY 10016

Medicare
Knowing Your Rights
AARP Fulfillment
1909 K. Street, NW
Washignton, DC 20049

Safety
National Safety Council
P.O. Box 11933
Chicago, ILL 60611

Home Safety Checklist for Older Consumers
CPSC
Washington, DC 20207

Center for Environmental Health
Centers for Disease Control
Atlanta, GA 30333

Retirement
American Association of Homes for the Aging
1050 17th Street, NW
Suite 770
Washington, DC 20036

National Association of Area Agencies on Aging
600 Maryland Ave., SW
Suite 208
Washington, DC 20024

AARP Worker Equity Dept.
1909 K. Street, NW
Washington, DC 20049

Travel
The Bureau of Consular Affairs
Dept. of State
Washington, DC 20520

Community Resources
Senior Centers
Senior Adult Association
Congregate Meals or Meals-on-Wheels
County Health Dept.
County Mental Health Dept.
County Social Services Dept.

Programs and Agencies for Older Adults:
(recruiting sources)

Senior Centers	There are approximately 8,000 centers nationwide reaching more than 7 million older adults through services such as transportation, nutrition, health promotion and volunteer activities. These centers are a gathering area for many older adults.
JTPA Programs	(Job Training Partnership Act) The purpose of this act is to prepare economically disadvantaged youth and unskilled adults for entry into the labor force through job training. Special funds are set aside for adults. Contact local JTPA providers to recruit participants into literacy programs.
Long Term Care Facilities	
Senior Housing Projects	
Retirement Communities	
Older Adult Fellowship Groups	These will vary from community to community. They may be developed around hobbies, neighborhoods or church affiliations.
Social Service Agencies	

Other organizations to contact:

- libraries
- school boards
- local businesses
- churches
- civic groups